

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-25 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the specification and claims 1, 23 and 24 are amended and claim 25 is added.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Colilla in the August 17, 2005 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

The specification was objected to based on an informality. By this Amendment, paragraph [0039] has been amended as suggested in the Office Action. It is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

Claim 23 was objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c). By this Amendment, claim 23 has been amended to clarify that the image forming apparatus is controlled (i.e., structurally built) to perform a flushing operation at the image forming region. Claim 23 is in proper dependent form and further limits claim 1. It is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 8-12 and 20-22. For the reasons discussed below, all of claims 1-25 are allowable.

Claims 1-5, 13, 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JP 2003-39758 (JP '758). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

JP '758 fails to disclose an image forming apparatus with at least one air suctioning portion and an ink receiver that are formed on a surface region of a sheet feed table, as recited in claim 1 and as similarly recited in claim 24.

As agreed during the personal interview, JP '758 fails to disclose all of the features recited in claims 1 and 24 because JP '758's suction holes 17 (air suctioning portion) and absorbent 19 (ink receiver) are formed on two separate surface regions.

In view of the foregoing, JP '758 fails to disclose all of the features recited in claims 1 and 24 as well as the additional features recited in the dependent claims thereof. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP '758 in view of JP 5-286129, claims 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP '758 in view of JP 1-275090, claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP '758 in view of Matsuhashi, U.S. Patent No. 5,997,129, and claims 6 and 17-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP '758 in view of Kodama et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0078147. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

None of the remaining applied references overcome the deficiencies of JP '758 because none of the remaining applied references disclose at least one air suctioning portion and an ink receiver that are formed on a surface region of a sheet feed table, as recited in claims 1 and 24. It is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-25 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:SMS/kzb

Attachments:

Amendment Transmittal  
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: August 19, 2005

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